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French archaeologists, and all of it is splendid material; but in doing so they have left out, probably on purpose, many things which are found in the works of the men mentioned above.

This manual is timely and is an excellent piece of work. Its authors are epigraphists and archaeologists of note, and they make almost no mistakes of fact. Roman archaeology has not been welcomed too warmly by the classicists, but this manual gives it a definite and irreproachable standing.

R. V. D. MAGOFFIN.

BOOKS OF MEDIEVAL AND MODERN EUROPEAN HISTORY

Benedictine Monachism: Studies in Benedictine Life and Rule.

By the Right Rev. CUTHBERT BUTLER, Abbot of Downside Abbey. (London: Longmans, Green, and Company. 1919. Pp. 387. 18s.)

THIS volume "consists of a connected series of essays covering the most important aspects of Benedictine life and activities. It is addressed, of course, primarily to Benedictines, but it should appeal . . . also, in a special way, to those scholars and students who hold the Benedictine name in veneration." These words from the author's preface may serve to indicate not the contents only but some of the limitations of this book. It is not an historical account of the black monks but a "systematic exposition of what may be called the philosophy, the theory, of the Benedictine rule and life". The historical element is not indeed lacking but it is subordinated to the main purpose of the work.

The chapters (IV.-VIII.) dealing with the spiritual life will be valuable to all who wish to gain an understanding of the dynamic of monachism; equally useful are the chapters on the Benedictine Vows, and Benedictine Poverty. The ninth chapter is an elaborate foot-note on the Rule. There follow five chapters on questions of government and organization, affording a convenient account of the Benedictine world to-day; a prosaic narrative or rather an elaborate time-table of the daily monastic round; and a hundred pages devoted to the history and influence of the black monks. This last part of the volume is the most sketchy and unsatisfactory.

Through the major part of the exposition runs a mildly polemic strain: the Abbot of Downside sets forth and defends his interpretation of the Rule of St. Benedict with particular reference to present-day conditions, and some of the manifestations of Benedictinism he considers contrary to the mind of the founder. Two ideas, broadly interpreted in the light of Newman's doctrine of development, are met with again and again: the conception of the monastic family, the autonomous and autocephalous community, is one, and that St. Benedict did not intend his spiritual sons to live lives of marked austerity, is the other. Of the

first Benedictines he says, "The general conditions of life were probably no harder or rougher than would have been the lot of most of them had they remained in the world", and he deprecates any tendency toward a greater asceticism, any "hankering after self-inflicted austerities". The Benedictine life should be one of moderation; the Rule must be liberally interpreted; and so Abbot Butler approves of smoking "at discretion" and does not censure the use of flesh meat, though the Rule enjoins abstinence therefrom.

The present pronounced tendency toward centralization, endangering the autonomy of the individual monastery and its family life, disturbs the author. Although he does not say so, this may well be one of the inevitable results of the workings of the papal system. That the religious orders aided the papacy in extending its authority is well known; it would be not unprofitable, perhaps, to trace the development of papal jurisdiction in terms of its increased control over the regular clergy.

As an interpretation of the Benedictine philosophy this book will be of service to all who are interested in ecclesiastical institutions; but if regarded as an historical work it must be used with caution. Its author relies entirely too much on secondary material — *e. g.*, Gasquet and Workman and Hannay — and leaves untouched all too many phases of Benedictine history for the book to be considered a thorough and scholarly contribution to historical literature. Of course, it is possible that the work was never intended to be so regarded. In that case, it is unfortunate that some chapters were not omitted. The index is sadly incomplete.

ALFRED H. SWEET.

French Civilization from its Origins to the Close of the Middle Ages. By ALBERT LÉON GUÉRARD. (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1921. Pp. 328. \$5.00.)

It is increasingly obvious to students of French literature that more attention is now given to the background than used to be the case. Formerly teachers and students were satisfied with aesthetic appreciation. Then came the development of historical and biographical study as an explanation of masterpieces. Now the authors are being placed in their social setting, and are interpreted as facts or results of national development. Professor Guérard of Rice Institute is already favorably known by his two volumes, *French Prophets of Yesterday*, and *French Civilization in the Nineteenth Century*. A Frenchman by birth, but one who has lived long enough in America to express himself as idiomatically and as vigorously in English as in his mother-tongue, he is performing the useful task of linking history and literature by works such as the present one. It should help to break down the water-tight compartments which too long in the universities of this country, as contrasted, for instance, with Oxford, have separated the historians from the students of letters.